

RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS

Wyoming Board of Agriculture
April 2, 2008
Conference Call

Present: Juan Reyes
Jack Corson, President
Jim Mickelson
Jim Bennage
Joe Thomas
Dave Graham
Gene Hardy, Vice President
John Etchepare, Director

Absent: Frank Galey, Dean of the College of Agriculture
Ryan Lance, Governor Freudenthal's Office
Patrick Zimmerer
John Hansen
Dalín Winters

Excused: Bridget Kukowski

Staff: Muff Parker, Recording Secretary
Jason Fearneyhough, Deputy Director
Hank Uden
Kim Decker

Budget

Jack asked the members if they had been able to determine the amount they wanted to put toward the Sage Grouse Conference. Muff said she should be getting the figures from Justin Williams as soon as he has received all of the invoices. They would probably be better able to make the financial determination - perhaps at their April 14 meeting.

Mitigation Funding

The fund has 36 million for the next 2 years for wildlife improvement only on the Anticline. The struggle now is that local folks feel they should have full control of the funds and the funding is really for the benefit of the landowner not the permittees. Agriculture was not at the table when the companies met and decided on the funding.

Tongue River Allotment Mitigation

This issue is being mitigation mediated by Lucy Pauly later this week. Those AUMs could be cut in half. Thirteen permittees are affected. Twelve of them are suing. The state has not joined the suit and is in the process of determining whether they will be able to intervene on every suit.

Leafcutter Bees

Hank Uden introduced Kim Decker who runs the leafcutter bee lab in Powell. Hank gave some background of the use of the lab. He wanted to inform the members of the changes being made to the leafcutter bee rules and regulations. These changes came about through the seed growers and they have approved the changes. The board is not

responsible for approve these rules. Kim said the number of samples has increased dramatically over last year. She anticipates the sampling should stay around 500 samples per year. Juan said he's seeing a shift from planting alfalfa to corn in his area. Most of the alfalfa seed produced in the basin is sold out of state. Leafcutter bees do real well in the area and the alfalfa grows well because there is not a lot of moisture so the growers can regulate the water through irrigation. Kim explained the process of sampling the larva during the winter and the certification process.

John and Muff talked about the value of the employee conference that was held yesterday. Both felt it was a positive conference.

Minutes

Jim Mickelson made a motion to approve the March 19 conference call. The motion was seconded by Juan. Motion carried.

Jim Bennage reported on the Wyoming Business Council he attended. He said most of the meeting was fairly routine and where they discussed the Open Meeting Act and some planning grants were approved. He said Cindy Garretson-Weibel gave overview of the value of agriculture to Wyoming. Jim said he would give a full report in Casper later this month when Dalin will be there to add to the report.

Juan said he recently heard from some producers in his area who are having trouble getting sheep shearers and herders into the county. He asked if there was anything the department can do to help even though this is a national problem. John Etchepare said he would see what he can do. Gene said the Department of Labor sent out questioners to sheep producers as to wages for shearers. The information received was skewed because of the way the question was prepared. John said when those questioners are completed; the producers need to be honest with the wages they pay so there is not complication down the road. Juan said the background checks are making it very difficult for the shearers to get through and the producers cannot find local labor to cover their needs. Jason said there was talk of a sheep shearing school and wondered if anything was happening to get that going. Consensus was it wouldn't work because American labor doesn't want to do that type of work for the amount of wages being paid.

Dave Graham made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Gene. Motion carried.

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Corson, President

Date